The Kailuan Story

—Old Mines into New

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The Kailuan Story

—*Old Mines into New*

by the Kailuan Workers'
Writing Group

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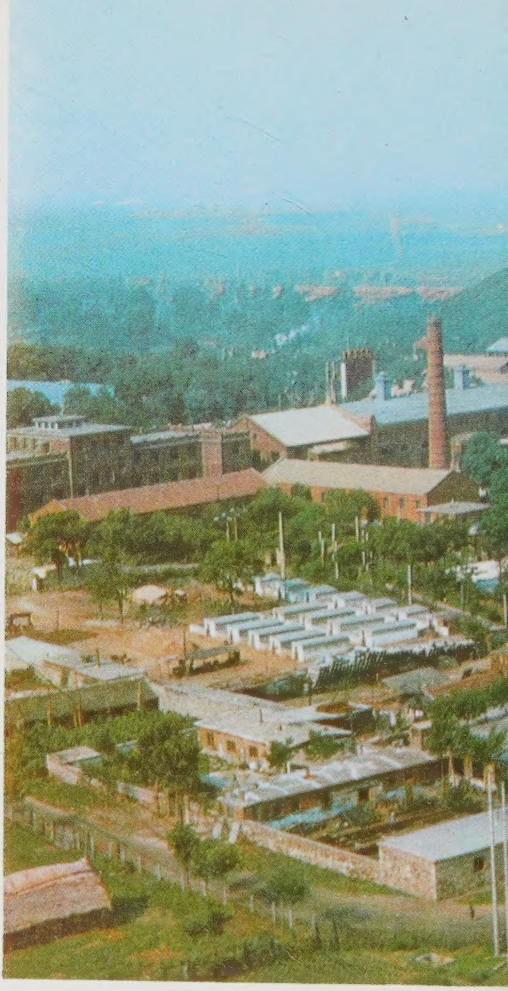
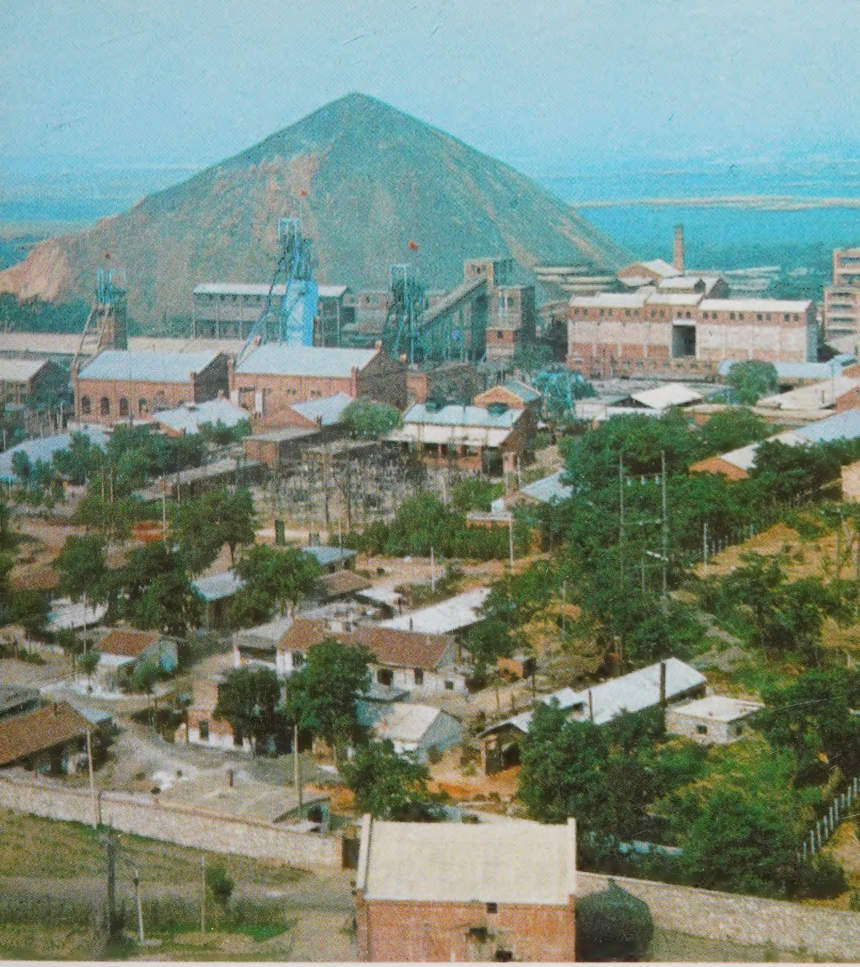
LOCATION OF KAILUAN COAL MINES

The Tangshan colliery flourishes today.



Views of the abandoned colliery before liberation.



The Machiakou colliery is an outstanding example of learning from Taching in industry.

Fankochuang, the first large and modern colliery built independently by the new China.

The Linhsi colliery at night.

The workers are conscientious in their study of Marxist-Leninist works.

Revolutionary mass criticism goes ever deeper.

Up-to-date extraction equipment in
tion at a Tangshan colliery coal

A red banner team proudly talks over new achievements at the mine.

Digging coal out with a pick before liberation.

A haulage road toda

An advanced team in hydraulic mining.

Pushing mine tubs before liberation.

A worker management group discusses ways to raise production and lower production costs.

A gate header designed and made by the workers themselves.

esilient shield supports
ade by the workers.

The Party secretary (*second from right*), engineer Su Yuan and workers of the Luchiato colliery discuss improving the coal-washing process.

inch powered by twin motors.

Ouyang Chi-hsiu (*third from left*), a worker-engineer, consults the workers on plans for haulage roads.

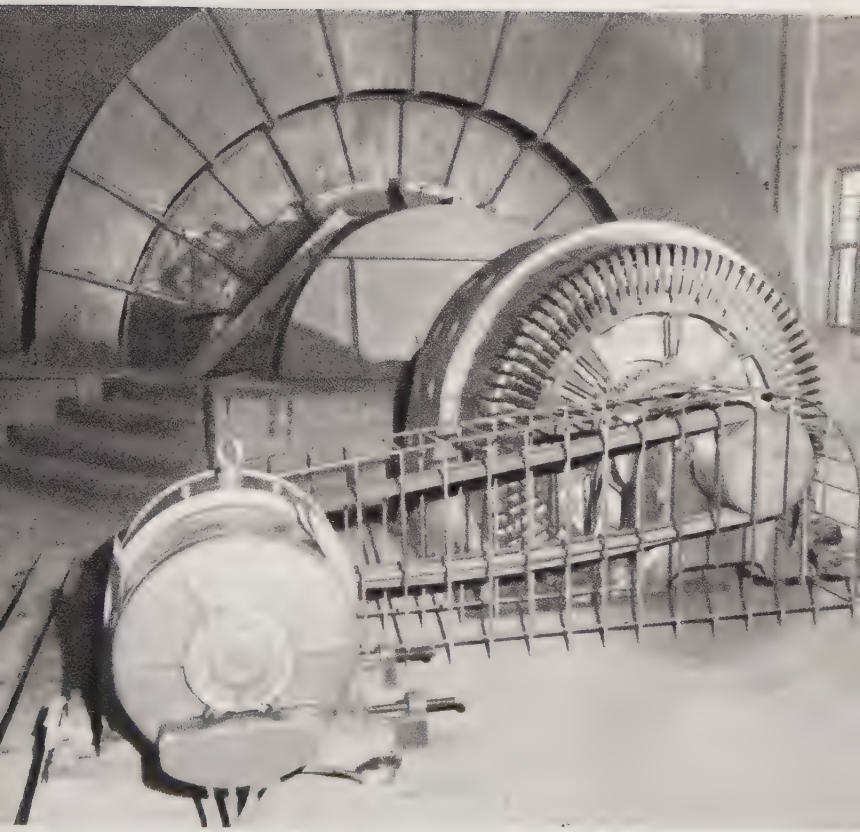
Yen Tzu-ching (*second from left*), a miner who now serves as Party secretary for the Machiakou colliery, takes a shift down the pit.

Wu Hsu-chih, a model worker, coaches a young miner.

Pulling together, model worker Hou Chan-yu and other miners move a heavy piece of equipment.

Model worker Kang Kuei-chen (*centre*) in consultation on a coal-washing problem.

A giant air exhauster.



Ultraviolet lamps for the miners.

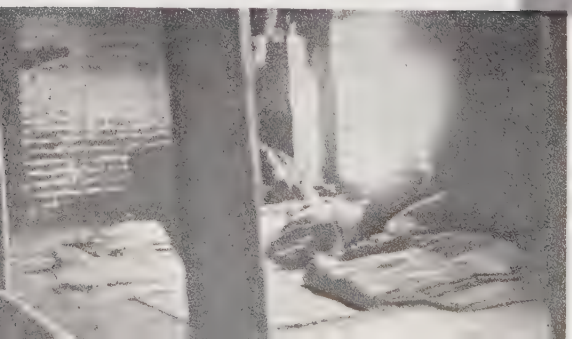
A new workers' hospital.

Kailuan College — set up for the mine workers.

Theatre at the grassroots.

Sports meet in the mining area.

Where miners lived huddled together before liberation.



Workers' housing today.

Apple orchard on former waste dump.

Convalescent miners in a park at Peitaiho.

A retired miner tells young workers the history of the mines from his own experience.

Retired workers in the mine's old folks' home.

At kindergarten.

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Foreword

Rich reserves of coal lie beneath the vast plains of eastern Hopei Province. The headframe-studded coal field of fifty square kilometres is bordered by the Yenshan Mountains on the north and by Pohai Bay on the south. It is served by two fine, all-season harbours, Chinwangtao and Hsinkang, to the east and west respectively. With the Peking-Shanhaikuan Railway crossing the area and a network of highways and rivers covering its entirety like the venation of a leaf, the collieries are well served by various transportation means. This area is the site of the well-known Kailuan Coal Mines.

The name Kailuan is an abbreviation from those of two coal fields — Kaiping and Luanchow. They comprise seven collieries: Tangshan, Linhsi, Chaokochuang, Tangchiachuang, Machiakou, Fankochuang and Luchiato. Mining has been carried on here for almost a century.

The Kaiping colliery was opened and put into operation in 1878 under the auspices of the Ching Government. Its organizational form was a so-called "merchant management under government supervision." The Ching Government did not allocate sufficient funds for running enterprises but raised money from private sources while retain-

ing control, so that the actual power was in the hands of a few bureaucrats. British imperialism lost no time in obtaining a foothold and, in 1900, took over the whole establishment. The Chinese later set up the Luanchow Coal Mining Company, which in 1912 was forced to merge with the Kaiping colliery, both to fall under the exclusive control of British imperialism in the "Kailan Mining Administration." This situation obtained until December 12, 1948 when the region was liberated and the mines were returned to the Chinese people.

In semi-feudal, semi-colonial old China, Kailuan was one of the places from which the imperialists drew the blood of the Chinese people. Under the reactionary rule of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism, the miners were ruthlessly oppressed and exploited, treated worse than the donkeys used in the pits. On the verge of starvation and with at most rags to their backs, they toiled in the dank, suffocating pits cutting and transporting coal by hand, often at the imperialists' bayonet point or under the lash of the bosses. The scourge of disease, hunger, flood, fire, gas and dust explosions and cave-ins were among the claimers of countless workers' lives. In the years of darkness the imperialists plundered nearly 200 million tons of the best-quality coal, leaving behind a sea of tears and blood and heaps of miners' skeletons. Insatiably greedy for maximum profits, the imperialists had only the thicker seams worked, never considering the damage they did to the underground resources or the disfigurement of the land surface by unsightly subsidence and waste piled up. The entire area had become a scene of desolation by the time of its liberation in 1948.

The old collieries of Kailuan were rejuvenated after liberation. And in the 27 years since, guided by Chair-

man Mao's revolutionary line, Kailuan first of all, through a democratic reform movement, abolished the imperialist system of exploitation and got rid of the feudal bosses. The mines have followed up with continuing socialist revolution, which has ushered in a flourishing situation in socialist construction.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution freed Kailuan from the interference caused by the counter-revolutionary revisionist line of Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao, and the mines have become still more prosperous.

One needs only to enter the wooded mining area to be impressed by the activity around the many towering headframes where sheaves turn ceaselessly, hoisting top-quality coal — "black gold" — that then flows into giant washeries and onto waiting railway cars. Hundreds of metres underground electric locomotives pull cars back and forth along broad, well-lit haulage roads. Fresh air is plentiful even at the remote coal faces, where workers cut into the coal seams with machines replacing picks.

A single coal face at Kailuan today yields as much as a whole colliery in the past; the output of coal in the 27 years since liberation has surpassed that in the seventy years before.

The Cultural Revolution and the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius have brought further rapid growth of production to Kailuan. The Kailuan Party committee has relied wholeheartedly on the working class, its own resources and on hard work, with the result that in the past nine years production has averaged an annual increase of over a million tons. The 1975 output of run-of-mine (ROM) coal had doubled the designed capacity, making one Kailuan the equivalent of two.

Kailuan workers look forward with full confidence and enthusiasm. They are determined to study the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat conscientiously, make conscious effort in carrying out the basic line and the policies of the Party, continue in-depth criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius, further promote the mass movement of learning from Taching — the pacesetter in China's industry — and go all out in striving for technical innovation and further mechanization so as to make greater contributions to socialist revolution and socialist construction.

From Slaves to Masters

Everything — the collieries themselves, production, the people's life — has changed in post-liberation Kailuan, the most important change, however, being in the people themselves. The miners, who were slaves under the bosses' heels, became masters of the country at liberation. Serious in following Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, they have been running and renewing the hundred-year-old collieries.

Slaves in the Old Society

Before liberation, Kailuan was a hellish dungeon for the miners, who were treated as slaves by the capitalists. The contract labour system and the hiring of feudal bosses, informers and toughs all protected the capitalists' sanguinary rule and merciless exploitation. During the Japanese imperialists' occupation the collieries were surrounded by trenches and guard-towers where cruel reactionary troops and police stood sentry day and night

with their guns at the ready. At the colliery gate, a miner had to take off his hat and unbutton his jacket to show his work badge, photo and identification card, which were strung around his neck, in preparation to be searched.

The working conditions down the pits were appalling, with passage possible only by crawling on all fours and safety measures grossly ignored. The dangerous mining method of block caving was used which required a miner to hew a seam into blocks with an ordinary pick, then cut the blocks free and prize them down with a spear three metres long. In the dark pits without adequate timbering or ventilation, this hazardous method increased the already high rate of accidents and put the lives of the miners in constant jeopardy.

One coal face at the Tangshan colliery was called Seventeen and a Half Cross-Cut. Coal seams here were thick and the goaf (area after the removal of coal), which ran vertically seven metres, was left unsupported. About this and other equally hazardous working conditions, the miners said in verse:

Seventeen and a Half Cross-Cut
Is a hell within a hell;
The coal is got out,
But only at death's knell.

When the miners scattered to avoid one of the cave-ins, they found a man missing and turned back to look for him. A feudal boss named Yang Shih-chen yelled: "Get back to work! What's just one man? It may be hard to find a three-legged frog, but it's easy enough to get two-legged men. Don't bother looking." But none of the miners would go back to work until the man was found and dug out from under a heap of rocks. He was already

dead — the miserable end to the miserable existence of countless toilers at the old Kailuan mines.

Coal faces lacked fresh air, the few manually operated fans near the stone drifting supplying a miner in the pit with less than a cubic metre of air per minute, a third of the minimum safety level. The temperature several hundred metres underground averaged above 30°C, and the only relief the panting, sweating workers had from it was by fanning with their own tattered jackets or hats. Noxious gases from the mine pervaded the atmosphere, and gas explosions and the pollution took heavy tolls.

A catastrophic gas explosion at the Tangshan colliery in October 1920 took 434 lives and disabled 122 more. The accident occurred in spite of the repeated warnings of experienced miners that there was a dangerously high level of gas at a coal face, and that an explosion was inevitable if mining operations continued. The bosses crassly ignored all warnings, however, and ordered the work to go on as usual. After the explosion occurred, they coldbloodedly had the area sealed off in order to prevent further damage to their property. The men were left below to die.

The collieries were littered with skeletons and soaked in the blood and tears of the miners and their bereaved families. A toll of 5,397 deaths at Kailuan, or one fatality in less than every three days, is recorded for the years 1905 to 1948, and this figure is unrealistically low. Sick or injured miners were neglected, and once disabled they were immediately dismissed. The able-bodied fared little better, for a long day's toil brought no more than a mere pittance, and many miners had to sell their children to live on, while their wives went out to beg in the streets.

Before the birth of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921, a miner's maintenance at Kailuan came to little more than half that for a mule, whose fodder cost half a silver dollar a day, while a full-time worker got 27 cents. A mule hauling coal in the pit was better treated than a man, for its driver was forbidden to beat it at will, while the miners were often beaten and cursed by the bosses. Once when a mule and its driver were trapped in a pit by a roof caving, the workers who went to the rescue were rebuked by the feudal boss for trying to get the man out first. "Get that mule out!" he demanded. "Never mind the man!" When the indignant miners refused, he flew into a rage and ordered: "Hurry up and get that mule out! Do you hear? The man can wait." The miners could take no more and gave the boss a thrashing, chased him out, and rescued their class brother.

Heroic Struggles

Where there is oppression, there is bound to be resistance. The miners at Kailuan never knuckled under to the reactionary rule of the enemy, were not intimidated but on the other hand waged long and heroic struggles against it.

Their first strike for higher wages broke out as early as 1882, in the first days of the mine. The entire coal field was seething and work had stopped altogether — a hard blow to the reactionary Ching rulers. Though this first strike action was suppressed by the feudal Ching rulers, it nevertheless led to many more such struggles at the Kailuan mines, and from then on the workers' movement surged vigorously forward. Between 1882 and 1921 there were thirteen strikes in the area.

After 1921, the Chinese Communist Party led the Kailuan workers' movement in an organized way into a new historical stage of political as well as economic struggles against the class enemy. This is shown in the unprecedentedly large-scale strike of 1922 involving five collieries. The miners' representatives met first on October 16 with the director of the mines and proposed a thirty per cent fringe benefits allowance for workers whose monthly wage was less than fifteen silver dollars, and some other measures to improve the workers' conditions. Not only had the mine authorities rejected the proposals but they colluded with the reactionary government in posting notices threatening the workers. The workers' reply came on October 23 when the miners at the Linhsi, Chaokochuang, Tangshan, Tangchiachuang and Machiakou collieries, and the dockers at Chinwangtao port, went on strike and telegraphed their declaration throughout the country.

On October 25 the mine owners called out more than a hundred foreign aggressor troops and 200 policemen from Tientsin, who went by rail to Linhsi to suppress the striking miners. The miners learned of this and decided to intercept their enemy at the Kuyeh railway station near Linhsi. They marched in mighty contingents, miners from Chaokochuang, railway workers and local peasants joining in force to give support. The crowd thronged the station, their angry shouting of slogans resounding far and wide. The workers had interrupted the rail line, so when the enemy's train pulled in, it ran off the rails. The enemy scrambled out and began shooting. The many thousands of workers and peasants, armed with axes, picks and broadswords, closed in on the intruders and routed them. With country-wide popular support, the strikers persisted for 25 days until victory.

In his brilliant essay "Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society," Chairman Mao highly praises the revolutionary militancy of the Kailuan miners at that time. He points out that from the strength displayed in the strikes of the Kailuan miners and of other industrial workers **we can see the important position of the industrial proletariat in the Chinese revolution.**

Led by the Chinese Communist Party, the Kailuan workers' movement surged ever higher, with several scores of major strikes between 1922 and 1948, when the area was liberated.

During the Japanese imperialist occupation the miners took to armed revolt to oppose the ruthless exploitation by the enemy. They broke into a puppet police station, seized weapons and ammunition and organized themselves into guerrilla units, stepping onto the road of armed struggle as Chairman Mao directed.

On the eve of liberation, the Kailuan workers again rallied in arms, organizing pickets to protect the mines in anticipation of the liberation.

Masters in the New Society

After liberation, following the launching of democratic reforms and the deepening development of socialist revolution, the miners struck down the feudal bosses and abolished contract labour and all brutal exploitative systems of the imperialists. Many Kailuan workers stepped into leading positions, running and building up the collieries.

The imperialist manager of the old Kailuan mines had stated arrogantly at the time of his flight in face of the liberation: " 'Pit-beggars' can't run mines. Kailuan won't

last three months without us!" Quite on the contrary, however, the Kailuan collieries have been so modernized in the past two decades and more that in production, technology and many other respects they are far superior to what they were under imperialist rule. It is the self-same miners who were called "pit-beggars" by the imperialists and reactionary authorities who have achieved this.

Yen Tzu-ching, Party secretary of the Machiakou colliery, is an example. Driven by poverty, he had begun working as a miner in the Tangchiachuang colliery at the age of fifteen. From pushing coal carts on a connecting bridge, he was soon transferred down the pit pushing tubs, cutting coal and pulling baskets. The baskets weighed a good seventy kilogrammes each when loaded, and to pull them a miner had to move on hands and knees along the low, dark and stifling haulage road, panting in the heat, a rope round one shoulder and a worn-out shoe-sole tied to each knee. An overseer or feudal boss would sit on the sidelines with a whip or club in his hand ready to come down on anyone he thought was a little slow. Young Yen Tzu-ching worked like a man beyond his years, straining till he gasped for breath and sweat rolled down his body with every move he made. By the end of the long work day his back was covered with wounds and his hands and knees were bleeding. When a foot injury caused the limb to swell so that he could scarcely walk for several days, he was compelled nonetheless to go down the pit and work. Yen spent eleven years toiling underground like this.

After liberation, filled with class hatred, Yen Tzu-ching plunged heart and soul into the stormy democratic reform movement and stood at the forefront of the struggle against the capitalists and feudal bosses. He gloriously joined

the Chinese Communist Party in 1949, and in 1952 was appointed chief of the production safety section at the Tangchiachuang colliery. He became the deputy director in charge of production at the Machiakou colliery in 1956.

Change of position, however, in no way changed his political qualities as an ordinary miner, whether in his more than ten years as deputy director or in his present capacity as colliery Party secretary and revolutionary committee chairman. Always setting his mind to the tasks at the colliery and never far from the rank and file, he has taken productive labour as a constant duty, at times combining it with tackling hard problems.

One example was in 1961 at the Machiakou colliery where the longwall inclined slicing mining method was adopted at some coal faces, with wire netting used as artificial roof. Previously, when mining was done overhead, the roof pressure increased and frequent falls of gravel occurred, which however endangered lives and hindered production. Yen thought about this problem while working at one of these faces. Then he called veteran workers and engineering staff together for a conference at which they decided to lay the wire netting up close to the roof instead of on the floor. This controlled the rock-falls and raised productivity. The miners said: "Old Yen is really our fine leader. He hasn't forgotten his class origin or allowed his head to be turned by his change of position. He's still very much one of us!"

From the ranks of these former "pit-beggars" not only have leading cadres come to the fore, but technicians as well. Ouyang Chi-hsiu, an engineer of the Fankochuang colliery, is one example. A miner working down the pit at the Linhsi colliery before liberation, Ouyang leapt from a literacy-class pupil to a graduate of the Peking Mining

Institute, thanks to the concern of the Party. He took the higher learning as a task expected of him and, aware of its role in socialist construction, spared no pains in learning. Combining theoretical study with his own practical experience, he completed the study task given him by the Party with flying colours.

Assigned to the Fankochuang colliery after graduation in 1958, Ouyang took up the jobs of mining team leader, mining technician, and then mining engineer. He and the miners succeeded in improving the haulage system, effecting great economy for the mine. Later, summing up experience and analysing relevant geological data, they changed the mining method at the No. 7 and No. 8 seams, raising the quality of the coal and reducing material input and production costs. He and the workers also contributed to safety in production. He worked down the pit for over two months at a seam where rock-falls were frequent, studying the regularity of the variation of roof behaviour after which they designed a new roof-control method that prevented the falls.

Veteran workers are the backbone of the Kailuan mines. Wu Hsu-chih, a veteran worker at the Tangchiachuang colliery, had toiled for a landlord in his early years before coming to Kailuan in 1938 only to find that he had left the landlord's dungeon to step into the capitalists' hell. In his ten years down the pits before liberation, his wife and four children all died, leaving him alone and desolate. Liberation reversed his status from slave to a master of the mines, and he was very stirred by this. With a strong sense of responsibility he wrote in his diary: "The Party is my mother, the colliery my home. I'll listen to the Party and take good care of my home." Guided by Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, Wu has never in the 27 years

since liberation asked for a single day's leave of absence, nor has he been late once. Always on the first car down the pit, he prepares for the day's work, while at the end of his shift he checks to see if everything is in proper order and is the last to leave. Wu is always on hand for the hardest jobs.

At the end of 1960, a 400-metre haulage road at a coal face in the 6th gate of the Tangchiachuang colliery was inundated, threatening nine scraper chain conveyors, equipment worth more than 100,000 yuan. After several tries to retrieve the scraper chain conveyors had failed, Wu Hsu-chih volunteered for the job with six other workers. The floor in the gate had heaved up so that the haulage tunnel, which should have been two metres high, was only a sixth of a metre, and water was gushing through. Turning to his comrades, Wu said encouragingly: "Tackling such a problem is like fighting a battle — if you don't defeat the enemy, he'll defeat you. There are bound to be difficulties in revolutionary work, and where there are difficulties, there is bound to be drive."

The tense battle began. Wu Hsu-chih led the way to enlarge the passageway onto the haulage road till it was big enough for them to make their way through into the flood area. Working in raincoats, they removed stones and dug channels to lead the water away. Several days were spent working like this in the chilling ground water. Though Wu was suffering with arthritis from toiling in the old society, he did not complain or stop working. His fellow workers urged him to see a doctor and leave the work to them, but he would not hear of this, absorbed as he was in saving the equipment. When all but one trough had been dragged out, the situation worsened. The floor continued heaving up, which made transporting by cart or

pulling impossible. What should they do? This was the property of the state, thought Wu, and every part of it was precious. The trough must be removed even if he had to carry it out. Then, bending down, he demanded: "Come, fellows, heave that trough onto my back!"

The comrades tried to dissuade him. "It weighs more than forty kilos. How can you carry it?"

"There's no time to lose. Come on, let me try!" And so the trough was lifted onto his back and off he went with it, on his hands and knees. It took more than two months of arduous struggle to retrieve the equipment, but with his leadership, the job was done. He thought that as a Communist Party member he should be wholehearted in serving the interests of the people of China and the world. And so he has been at the forefront with his experience at every critical moment, calmly and skilfully dealing with whatever problems arise.

The conscientiousness of Liu Ho, a 61-year-old storekeeper at the Linhsi colliery, has earned him the nickname "Red Housekeeper" for the revolution. In his 47 years at Kailuan he has seen the contrast between the old society and the new and is thoroughly devoted to the socialist colliery, wanting to save every penny for the country. Since working as storekeeper, he always has a satchel on his shoulder in which he puts odds and ends he picks up around the colliery — a screw, a piece of wire, bits of iron etc. — for his "waste material storehouse." Following the principle of "building up the country through hard work and thrift," he issues used items which are still good before issuing new ones.

A young worker who was issued an old lamp complained: "Why are you so stingy with supplies? Don't you realize we're a big enterprise?"

"I certainly do," Liu Ho explained patiently, "and that's all the more reason why I emphasize thrift. You should save, too, and so should everyone throughout our country. If we all save what we can, we'll be able to build socialism faster." The youth then accepted the lamp gladly and promised also to think about thrift in the future.

The older workers' spirit of saving for the revolution permeates Kailuan. Another example is the collection of coal dust from the miners' work clothes, which amounts to about a ton a month, and that scattered around the trucks during unloading. Rubber-boot repairers collect rubber filings for regeneration. Saw-mill workers have changed coarse saw blades into fine ones for better utilization of logs. In 1972 and 1973, repairs and recoveries of materials were extended to include 348 items, creating a value of 16.23 million yuan. Major recoveries and amounts are:

Scrap iron	18,800 tons
Non-ferrous metals	115 tons
Oil	182 tons
Steel	7,800 tons

Kailuan's production costs in 1972 fell by 17.13 per cent as compared with 1965, and in 1973 they fell another 0.31 per cent to make the figure among the lowest for China's large collieries.

Fighting shoulder to shoulder with the older workers are many vigorous youth who are set on being good successors to the revolution. Their introduction at the mines includes the history and revolutionary tradition of Kailuan; that is, class education. They study Marxist-Leninist classics and Chairman Mao's works regularly and earnestly while learning production skills, so that they continue to make good progress in their ideological and political under-

standing as guiding their advance in technical skill. Quite a number of these young miners have become model workers, already competent at their jobs. Some have been admitted into the Chinese Communist Party or the Communist Youth League. Since the beginning of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, 272 young workers have been promoted to serve in leading organs at various levels.

The story of the old model worker Wu Hsu-chih and the young Liu Man-cheng as master and apprentice may illustrate how the young workers are taught at Kailuan.

From a miner's family, Liu Man-cheng had had his heart set on this work from his childhood, for he loved the colliery. His wish was fulfilled in 1966 when he graduated from school and was assigned to work at the Tangchiachuang colliery. He started out as a face worker and was soon apprenticed to Wu Hsu-chih, who taught him to operate a coal cutter. When he took the wheel for the first time he was very excited. Besides, his skill did not yet match his eagerness, so that the cutter got quite out of hand. Master Wu noticed his apprentice's anxiety and gave him extra, patient help.

One day Wu brought a well-preserved paper yellow with age to show Liu. On the paper in red and blue pencil lines was a sketch plan of the drive system in an old-fashioned coal cutter. "Why did you keep this?" the young man asked. "What's the use of it?"

Master Wu then told how he had kept the sketch for twenty years, and his whole experience at Kailuan. He had started out dragging the heavy baskets of coal out of the pit on his hands and knees and only after liberation had touched a coal cutter. "This old drawing is still very valuable," he said, "not in operating a coal cutter any more, of course, but it says a lot about the determination

of us old workers to build up the colliery and produce more and better coal for our country. I drew it when I was learning to operate a coal cutter. It says that enthusiasm and drive are not enough; we've got to have skill, too, for building socialism. I'm going to give this old drawing to you to keep. It'll remind you to display the revolutionary spirit of us workers and to master the techniques needed in serving the people!"

The youth, moved almost to tears, took the sketch in both hands, and after some time said: "Master Wu, you needn't worry about me. I won't let the Party down. I'll live up to Chairman Mao's expectations."

The young man had gained clearer insight on the relation between politics and job skills. He studied Chairman Mao's works earnestly, while at the same time learning modestly from the master worker, for he was eager to contribute his share towards the construction of the socialist colliery. He formed a mental picture of the master worker's movements at the wheel and observed closely their effect on the mine roof. He made a careful analysis of the cutter's sound, which varied with the quality of the coal, and governed the moving of the conveyor on this basis. In October 1972 young Liu took over the coal cutter and operated it in the same manner as old Wu, checking it before each shift, seeing that it was in good working order afterwards and fulfilling all his tasks outstandingly.

Liu does many other jobs as well, on his own initiative. He went back to his old job as face worker when the coal seam was unsuitable for machine cutting; when a new haulage road was under construction he would take the job as heading man. He kept a big shovel handy for clearing away the loose coal along the conveyor. Such

deeds beyond the call of duty won Liu frequent praise from fellow workers, to which he would reply simply: "I still have a long way to go before I can hold a candle to Master Wu."

In political and economic status, and in cultural and material life, the miners at Kailuan are fundamentally different today. Through the Cultural Revolution especially, the miners have further consolidated their power at every level of leadership, ninety per cent of the members of leading organs being of worker origin. Workers participate in all administrative and technical organs, such as the committee for long-range planning, field headquarters for construction projects, the leading group for industrial design, the leadership of technical revolution and technical innovation groups, and in mass administrative groups in grassroots production units, where miners constitute the main body.

Besides their role in organization, the workers are relied upon by the Kailuan Party committee for answers to questions concerning political line and other questions concerning the entire Kailuan mines such as checking and approving a new coal face, the design and examination of an engineering project, and so forth.

From 1968 the Chinese working class has entered the political arena of the superstructure. At Kailuan this is demonstrated by the setting up of the workers' Mao Tsetung Thought propaganda teams. They plunged into the task of struggle-criticism-transformation in the entire superstructure, firmly grasping class struggle in the realm of ideology. Striving to grip firmly the weapon of theory, they have been studying Marxist-Leninist classics and Chairman Mao's works conscientiously to raise their consciousness of class struggle and the struggle between the

two lines. In the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius, a large and strong workers' theoretical contingent has been formed, with more than 30,000 workers and staff members participating in theoretical study groups and more than 10,000 workers trained as instructors in Marxist-Leninist theory. Many with a low literacy level have persevered in studying Marxist-Leninist classics and works of Chairman Mao so that they are able to write down their gains from the study and also to write articles criticizing Lin Piao and Confucius. These workers have been invited to speak in units inside Kailuan and also in outside units.

Though their work is often hundreds of metres underground, the workers always concern themselves with major events in the class struggle and in the world. They have organized study groups on the current economic crisis in the capitalist countries. Old workers Wu Hsu-chih and Hou Chan-yu have written for their broadcast, and for magazines and newspapers.

Amateur athletes and artists have been tempered in class struggle and have grown into a big force. They have written and performed plays on the struggles at Kailuan, held sports meets, and some have written their family histories or the history of the collieries, creating revolutionary literary works which are warmly received by their fellow workers. These are the same miners, the "pit-beggars" of the old society, illiterate with the school doors closed to them, who are now masters of the socialist new culture and playing an important role in the socialist revolution in the superstructure in China.

Kailuan workers now participate directly in their country's higher state organs and they are represented on the Revolutionary Committee of Hopei Province and also that of Tangshan city, both committees having been set up

during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. In January 1975 three Kailuan workers proudly took part as deputies to the Fourth National People's Congress, the highest organ of state power, and one of them, Fan Teh-ling, was elected a member of its Standing Committee. Thus we see the "pit-beggars" of the past who were so discriminated against in the old society stepping into the Great Hall of the People along with the leaders of the Party and state. We see them engaged in the revision of the Constitution of China, approving the Report on the Work of the Government, electing and appointing leading state personnel. In short, those who were so downtrodden in the old society have become genuine masters in the new.

II

Reconstruction at Kailuan

The Kailuan coal field has been resuscitated and is going strong after more than a score of years of painstaking efforts made by the workers and staff members who, guided by Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line, have persevered in putting proletarian politics in command over economic matters, and in giving full play to the revolutionary spirit of independence and self-reliance.

In the entire historical period of socialism, the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between the socialist road and the capitalist road, between the proletarian revolutionary line and the bourgeois revisionist line is long and tortuous and at times even very acute. This general truth applies to the situation at Kailuan after liberation. Can workers run the mines? Should Kailuan persist in putting proletarian politics in command? Should Kailuan launch a movement of learning from Taching in industry? These are vital questions of orientation and political line which have been at issue, giving rise to repeated fierce struggles. In their triumphant march forward against wind and wave, the Kailuan workers and

staff members have firmly grasped the two-line struggle as the key link.

A Dead Colliery Comes to Life

No sooner had the mines been returned to the people and reconstruction begun than an acute struggle took place over the question of who was to lead. Rely on the working class wholeheartedly, or on a small number of bourgeois experts?

The Kailuan workers met head-on the fallacy spread by the imperialists that "'pit-beggars' can't run mines." Under the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Chinese Communist Party, their achievements in rebuilding the collieries have given a resounding answer to that fallacy. They have proved that the miners are not only the rightful owners of the mines, but that they are good managers of the mines as well.

Relying on their own strength, they very quickly had the pits producing normally, had completed the democratic reform and revised the rules and regulations governing operation and management. The Kailuan mines entered the period of the First Five-Year Plan in 1953 during which the workers, acting in accordance with the Party's general line for the transition period as formulated by Chairman Mao, carried out socialist transformation in the relations of production, while undertaking all-round technical transformation in mining methods, hoisting, and in the transport and ventilation systems. These measures resulted in rising productivity and increasing output year after year. The production in 1957 was several times that in 1949.

The Tangshan colliery is a striking example of technical transformation. The oldest in Kailuan, this colliery was very backward in equipment and mining techniques. Its daily ROM coal output stood at little more than 1,000 tons on the eve of liberation.

After liberation, the miners carried out the first stage of technical transformation. According to the reserve conditions of different coal seams, they replaced the old block-caving mining method with various advanced cutting methods, and animal-drawn or manually pulled tubs with electric locomotives. They opened a downcast and an upcast shaft, which increased the amount of ventilation air to the pits to 3.3 times that before liberation.

The No. 1 main shaft at this colliery is the oldest of its kind at Kailuan. Built in 1878, it had subsequently been equipped with a steam winding engine. The capitalists boasted of the shaft as a "model" of mechanization, though its annual haulage amounted to only 400,000 tons of coal. After liberation, this was replaced by an electric winder, and the old headframe with a steel headframe. Cages gave way to skips for hoisting, and the main shaft was extended to reach two mining levels, considerably increasing its hoisting capacity. These improvements raised total production in 1957 to more than 2.1 million tons, two and a half times the 1948 figure.

Overhauling this dilapidated colliery was not all the Kailuan workers did, but they went on to revive the Machiakou colliery, sealed for more than twenty years and declared dead by the imperialists. Since 1908, when the colliery was opened, annual production had reached 800,000 tons, more than fifteen million tons of high-quality coal having been plundered by the imperialists from this colliery alone in their more than twenty years of occupa-

tion. They had abandoned it on January 9, 1936, when they considered it insufficiently productive to warrant continued operation. Within half a year all the underground timber posts, haulage rails and electric surface facilities had been dismantled and sold, and two years later the pit was flooded by ground water, while the field above was a wilderness where rabbits bred and wolves roamed. A mine built by the Chinese workers' hands was turned into a desolate waste.

After liberation, the Party and the state decided to revive this dead colliery, and when the good news of the decision spread, it set the Kailuan people astir. As masters of the colliery now, more than twenty retired miners came some several hundred kilometres to offer information and facts that were very useful in the reconstruction. At the same time, the leadership of the Kailuan mines, by self-reliance and thrift and relying on the wisdom and strength of the workers, made a comprehensive sketch plan within a few months in 1954. Skilled workers from other Kailuan collieries and supplies and equipment from eastern and northern China soon arrived at Machiakou, and the once deathly silent wasteland suddenly became a worksite with red banners waving and cheerful shouts resounding. Many stirring events marked the upsurge of the reconstruction.

In three years of herculean effort the workers pumped out more than eight million tons of water, repaired over 20,000 metres of haulage roads and installed all equipment for the hoisting, transportation, ventilation and drainage systems. The long dead colliery was revived.

On December 15, 1957 when the first load of high-quality coal was brought up, an old miner wept with joyful emotion as he took a handful and examined it.

Building a New Colliery Self-Reliantly

Along with the fulfilment of China's First Five-Year Plan (1953-57), Kailuan had also won basic victory in its socialist transformation. But class enemies, not reconciled to their defeat, again challenged the proletariat in their bid for power in the mines. The bourgeois Rightists at Kailuan, acting in collusion with their counterparts elsewhere in China, rushed into the open at the outset of the Party's rectification campaign, shouting such fallacies as "the new society isn't as good as the old" and "laymen can't lead professionals," for the sole purpose of restoring their lost paradise. A campaign of rectification and opposing the Rightists was unfolded under the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee. The Kailuan workers actively plunged into the struggle and smashed the attacks by the class enemies, and in doing so raised their initiative for socialist construction to unprecedented heights, bringing into full play the revolutionary spirit of daring to think and daring to act.

In 1958, guided by the general line of **"going all out, aiming high and achieving greater, faster, better and more economical results in building socialism,"** the Kailuan workers made great strides in production and created new records. Coal hydraulicking productivity per man-shift at the Linhsi colliery and daily advance in air-shaft driving at the Tangshan colliery topped national records. In the spirit of self-reliance and by doing away with fetishes and superstitions and emancipating the mind, they volunteered altogether more than 100,000 suggestions that year for rationalizing production, which gave powerful impetus to Kailuan's technical reforms and resulted in big in-

creases in output. The planned target for that year, which was 51.3 per cent higher than for the year before, was fulfilled eleven days ahead of schedule.

While making leaps in production, the Kailuan workers built a large colliery with up-to-date equipment at Fankochuang, a momentous engineering feat, for it was the first to be designed and constructed by China independently.

A rich coal reserve at the southeastern edge of the Kailuan field, on which the imperialists had kept a covetous eye, lay under a tract of wasteland. To reach the coal an eighty-metre stratum of quicksand had to be dealt with. This had stumped the imperialists.

In the triumphant spirit of the Great Leap Forward, the Kailuan workers in 1958 declared that the Chinese working class had the will and the ability to accomplish what the imperialists could not. Formed into mighty contingents, they marched to the construction site to bring to light the dormant wealth.

To control the quicksand, they applied a method known as shaft-sinking freezing, which conventionally calls for freezing from the lower level up. The Kailuan workers, however, experimented and created a freezing method with reverse circulation, i.e., freezing from the upper level down, or freezing as they worked, a part at a time. This innovative measure speeded construction considerably.

Another convention they broke through was in shaft sinking through quicksand. It had been the rule that the shaft wall was lined each twenty metres during sinking to prevent collapse of the wall. But again the workers experimented, first extending this limit to 25 metres, then 30, and finally to 38 metres. This not only speeded the work,

but it further improved engineering quality, as there were fewer joints in the wall linings.

After conquering the quicksand stratum the workers tackled the massive inrush of water at the shaft head, which increased from 30 to 40 tons per hour to 140 tons, making work next to impossible. To give up, or to carry on? The workers' answer was firm: "No torrent of water can breach the will of the working class. We won't stop even for one minute!" Water at the bottom of the pit shaft rose till it was waist-high, and the grab could not be operated to pick up stones. The workers picked up the stones by hand and then lowered more pumps and suspended water rings on the shaft walls to get rid of the water. So effective was their style of working that despite all odds they scored the best national record at that time for monthly shaft sinking.

The builders enjoyed support from all around. At the peak of construction, when the transport of materials lagged behind, miners on other jobs, housewives, even school children, all volunteered to help by carrying what they could on their way to work or school from the stockpile of sand, lime or cement, five kilometres from the worksite.

With only a matshed to rest in, many workers stayed at the worksite during the several months of construction, taking naps to drive away fatigue and rushing back to work on awakening. After many memorable days and nights, the mine went into operation on October 1, 1964, new China's 15th anniversary. Fluorescent lights flooded the spacious underground lot, where trolley trains shuttled back and forth. The transportation of coal was now automated, the equipment all made in China. The rumbling of the cars as they moved along the haulage roads sounded like music on this grand occasion.

Learning from Taching, a New Leap Forward

Class struggle is long and complex. During the three years of temporary difficulties in China's national economy (1960-62), the Kailuan workers succeeded in opposing Liu Shao-chi's revisionist line, calling a halt to all construction projects, and went ahead with the completion of new collieries. Next, before the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, Liu Shao-chi and company threw cold water on the enthusiasm of the workers by pushing a series of restrictive and oppressive revisionist measures such as "bonuses in command," "material incentives" and "technicians make rules and regulations, administrative cadres execute them, and the workers have the duty only to carry them out."

But the ensuing revolutionary torrent of the Cultural Revolution shattered such conventional thinking and eliminated the poison of these revisionist measures. The workers' sense of being masters of the mines was greatly strengthened. With their enthusiasm for socialist construction heightened, "mining for the revolution" became their watchword.

During the Cultural Revolution, when class enemies viciously said to "stop work and make revolution," veteran workers represented by Wu Hsu-chih immediately put up big-character posters refuting them and resolutely responding to the call of Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee to "grasp revolution, promote production." Persisting in carrying on the movement outside of work hours, they led the workers to redouble their efforts, so that production rose. The increase in output in 1968 and 1969 alone would supply the households of a city with a million population for a whole year.

Summing up their experience in learning from Taching before the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, Kailuan in 1970 launched a further mass movement to learn from this pacesetter in industry. The goal was to raise production to twice Kailuan's designed capacity in the Fourth Five-Year Plan period by exploiting the potentiality of the old collieries.

But things did not go smoothly. There was sharp controversy within the leading body from the very beginning, a few claiming that Kailuan's big old mines had the disadvantages of deep shafts and long haulage roads, while conditions at the coal faces made very little possible with the old equipment. They insisted that with all these handicaps an annual increase of a few per cent would take stupendous effort; how could substantial increases be made without adding manpower and equipment, without opening up new mines?

The majority of the leading body, however, said that this view was in essence the metaphysical viewpoint of "the potential capacity is exhausted" and "production has reached its limit" at Kailuan. This was simply not so, and it ran counter to the spirit of the general line for socialist construction formulated by Chairman Mao, which called for going all out, aiming high and achieving greater, faster, better and more economical results in building socialism. It was true that the collieries were old and it would not be easy to get production going, yet from the mines' long history they knew the reserves were rich and available. Most important, Kailuan had a workers' force armed with Mao Tsetung Thought, educated in its glorious revolutionary tradition and tempered in protracted struggle. This force had extraordinary fighting capacity and, provided the political line was correct and wholehearted reliance was

placed on the working class, unfavourable factors could be turned into favourable ones.

The two different views and conclusions drawn from them reflected essentially the two-line struggle within the leading body. **The line is the key link; once it is grasped, everything falls into place.** The Party Central Committee issued a directive to launch a campaign for increasing production and practising economy. On the basis of this directive, the Kailuan Party committee at once carried out deep-going education in class struggle and the struggle between the two lines.

They read the directive to the workers and told them how production had risen in other units after learning from Taching. Fan Teh-ling, a veteran worker at the Tangshan colliery who was then an alternate member of the Ninth Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (now a member of the Party's Tenth Central Committee and of the Standing Committee of the Fourth National People's Congress) popularized this experience at the various collieries. He talked with nearly a thousand model workers and activists, after which the entire work force plunged into the mass movement to learn from Taching and to carry out the **Charter of the Anshan Iron and Steel Company.*** Within a few days thousands of big-character posters appeared on the walls expressing the workers' readiness for action to learn from Taching's experience. They

* In a directive issued in March, 1960, Chairman Mao, in summing up China's experience in socialist revolution and socialist construction, formulated the following principles as the "Anshan Charter": keep politics firmly in command; strengthen Party leadership; launch vigorous mass movements; institute the systems of cadre participation in productive labour and worker participation in management, of reform of irrational and outmoded rules and regulations, and of close co-operation among cadres, workers and technicians; go all out with technical innovation and technical revolution.

pledged to persist in proletarian politics taking command, self-reliance, the mass-movement approach, large-scale renovation of techniques, and tapping the potentialities of old collieries. One Kailuan should produce the equivalent of two.

Some veteran workers of the Chaokochuang colliery set up an "office" at the colliery gate where they received suggestions on tapping the mine's potentiality. More than 200 were offered in the first few days, together with 51 models demonstrating improved mining methods. So great was the enthusiasm that convalescent miners demanded discharge from sanatoriums, retired miners requested to return to work, and those who had been transferred out of the pits reorganized as an underground task force. The entire Kailuan field seethed with emulation, and both revolution and production surged ahead.

The Tangchiachuang colliery scored the first big victory by doubling output at two coal faces in thin seam. A shock drifting crew at the Luchiato colliery created a record for the monthly advance of coal road with single face by increasing their rate to 3.5 times the normal. At the Tangshan colliery the enthusiastic miners overhauled a ventilation shaft in nineteen days; three months had been required before. The workers here also boosted the lifting capacity of the No. 1 hoisting shaft, beginning by using ten-ton skips instead of the old eight-ton ones. But the main problem confronting them was in obtaining the corresponding increase in the capacity of the motor for lifting. One suggestion was to install another motor of the same specification, i.e., 1,200 h.p., in parallel according to a time-honoured rule that in combining two motors in parallel the two must be of the same capacity. But they had only one 1,200-h.p. motor on hand. Should they wait for the

higher authorities to allocate another motor, or should they rely on their own resources? The workers answered: "There's no time to lose. We must learn from the Taching workers to persevere in self-reliance and not ask for a new motor." Their suggestion was based on the idea of hitching a donkey to a mule. Two mules were not necessarily needed to pull a cart. Why should two big motors be needed to lift the extra load? The colliery Party committee supported this suggestion, and a three-in-one team of workers, technicians and leading cadres was set up to tackle the problem. They used a 425-kw. motor, testing the combination more than twenty times. These two motors were comparable in speed, and though there were technical differences, they were successfully combined. The hoisting capacity of the shaft was increased 25 per cent, meaning half a millon tons more of coal a year.

Actively learning from Taching, Kailuan's progress leapt forward. The state target for the 1970 output was fulfilled 55 days ahead of schedule, and the mines' production increase that year set a new record in its history.

But the struggle had by no means ended. Early in 1971 some comrades, posing revolution against production, and politics against profession, held that learning from Taching applied only to production. In view of this, the Kailuan Party committees at all levels called for deep-going discussion on this question both inside and outside the Party, mobilizing the masses to criticize the revisionist line so as to attain unity of thinking through struggle. Then they went on to organize a number of specialized teams to make a comprehensive and detailed survey of the land surface and underground conditions. When this information was presented before the cadres and workers, there was a consensus of opinion, and their determination

and confidence in learning from Taching grew. At the Party congress of the Kailuan mines, resolutions were adopted to further promote the mass movement of learning from Taching. Workers said: "**'In industry, learn from Taching'** is a great call by Chairman Mao, a vital issue of political line." They would firmly carry out the resolution of the Party congress to learn from the spirit of the pace-setting oilfield, follow the Taching way and build Kailuan into a Taching-type enterprise.

The mental turns into the material. With the political and ideological consciousness of the workers and staff members raised and revolutionary unity strengthened, Kailuan in the movement to learn from Taching overfulfilled the state-planned target in 1971 and 1972, overcoming unusual rushes of ground water into the pit and strong winds above, to see another new leap in production.

Flooding of a gate by ground water occurred at the Chaokochuang colliery on March 8, 1972 when a sudden gush of water poured in at a rate of twelve tons a minute. The gate was soon cut into two sections, while a coal face was submerged, threatening the entire colliery and two neighbouring mines.

A battle against the flood had begun immediately, with the colliery Party committee advancing the slogan: "Strive to increase production while fighting the flood." Workers and staff members put up big-character posters, applying to join the battle. The workers said: "Faced with difficulties, our courage grows and we will never relax. Taching workers can control oil-well blow-outs; we Kailuan workers will control this water."

The Chaokochuang colliery was not alone in the fight, all Kailuan and also other mines gave support with men and materials. The Kailuan Party committee declared

that loss at one colliery would be compensated by others; loss at one level would be made up by other levels, and they pledged not to be an ounce short in fulfilling the state output plan.

The cadres always stood in the van in the days and nights of the tense fight. The deputy Party secretary of the Chaokochuang colliery Kuo Piao, who had multiple health problems, nonetheless stayed in the dispatch room directing operations, while other colliery Party committee members headed shock teams down the pit retrieving equipment. Regardless of waist-deep water, they worked round the clock and saved 145 pieces of machinery and other equipment.

Workers displayed their heroism in forming a human wall across the haulage road to contain the flood. The water was chest high in the pit and flowing so swiftly that the dam of earth-filled gunny bags was immediately breached and the whole works was in danger of being swept away. At this critical moment, the head of No. 2 drifting crew shouted to his men: "Follow me. Let's stop this flood!" The dozen or so men of the crew followed him, linking arms and slowing the flow so that the dam could be reinforced.

The flow of water gathered force and the danger grew. The workers suggested drilling and grouting to seal up the cracks admitting the water, and when the Party committee agreed, a three-in-one team was set up to solve the engineering problems involved. The sources of the water were soon blocked and the flood beaten.

Chaokochuang's victory against the flood and at the same time its success in production became an example for the entire Kailuan coal field and further inspired the fighting spirit and revolutionary will of the workers.

In the movement to criticize Lin Piao and rectify the style of work beginning in early 1973, the Kailuan workers condemned the crimes of traitor Lin's sabotage of socialist construction. In doing this, they raised their consciousness of class struggle and two-line struggle still further. They set themselves new tasks in learning from Taching and in increasing production.

The smaller Machiakou colliery was also outstanding in improving mining methods. Their equipment was out of date and the mining conditions were hard. Through a mass movement for technical reform in which workers, technicians and cadres put their heads together, new machines and technical innovations such as a saw, loading machine and bunker train were made — more than 290 items in all. Overcoming unfavourable natural conditions, the colliery achieved sustained high output records.

In August 1973, when news of the successful conclusion of the Party's Tenth National Congress reached the Machiakou area, the Party branch in the First Mining District immediately organized the workers there for a drive to break the production record. Daily output at the coal face doubled the planned figure, overtaking the new record of 1972.

The workers' enthusiasm rose to new heights. The old miner Tsui Lien-sheng, for example, went on working with a badly injured hand that required three stitches. Given leave, Tsui remained at his post. This veteran's revolutionary spirit inspired the young workers, and a young worker named Ma broke the record in erecting supports by putting up a hundred posts per man shift, or six times the normal number. But Ma's record stood for only one day, for on the next another young worker erected 124 posts. Heated emulation swept the mining district and

more than sixty of its 400-some miners set new records. By December 26 Machiakou had fulfilled its planned target of doubling the designed production capacity. It was two years ahead of schedule.

The performance at Machiakou in fact showed what was happening all over the Kailuan field, with other collieries breaking records too. Fankochuang was first in the country in monthly output at a coal face with a thin seam, cutting five times the highest norm. Linhsi topped the Kailuan field in several major economic indicators, its monthly output once reaching twice the designed capacity. Other collieries followed, and their production also rose.

Kailuan in 1973 chalked up more new records than it had ever done before. That year, too, it overfulfilled the state plan in production ahead of schedule, its increase being 11.5 per cent over 1972 and the total 59.75 per cent over the designed capacity. There were more than a hundred outstanding units, while outstanding individuals exceeded 10,000. These collectives and individuals, led by the Kailuan Party committee and keeping close to the masses, formed a backbone and bridge between the leadership and the rank and file. Vanguards in criticizing Lin Piao's revisionist line, they were also trail blazers in exploiting the potentialities of the old collieries. Spurred by their example, the Kailuan workers and staff members advanced revolution and raised production onto a yet higher level.

The campaign of criticizing Lin Piao and Confucius in 1974 was even more powerful in enhancing the zeal of the Kailuan workers and staff to build socialism. In this campaign they earnestly studied Marxist-Leninist classics and Chairman Mao's works, with the help of leading cadres, and thoroughly criticized Lin Piao's counter-

revolutionary revisionist line and the ideology of the reactionary moribund classes — the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius.

This was manifested at the Tangchiachuang colliery when in early March 1974 the low hoisting capacity of a new shaft had become a bottleneck holding up production. Members of the colliery Party committee promptly made a field investigation and mobilized miners to criticize Lin Piao's reactionary concept of "innate genius," which led them to think more boldly and offer many fresh ideas so that they succeeded in improving the cage-lifting facilities with a resultant 35-per cent leap in the hoisting capacity of the new shaft. From then on, daily output increased by more than 1,000 tons and the colliery fulfilled its state-planned target 51 days ahead of schedule.

In 1974 the Kailuan field recorded more than 300 items of major technical innovations. Mechanized mining was 25 per cent more than in 1965, the year before the Cultural Revolution began. The year's production of ROM coal, after large increases for six consecutive years, showed a further increase of more than 2.9 million tons over 1973, or the equivalent of the annual output of three large collieries. The state-planned target for 1974 was fulfilled thirty days ahead of schedule.

Following the Machiakou colliery, the three old collieries of Linhsi, Tangchiachuang and Tangshan in 1974 also attained the goal of producing twice the designed capacity ahead of time.

In order to gain first-hand information on the experience of the Taching Oilfield, principal leading members of the Kailuan Party committee led a group of cadres, workers and technicians to that pacesetter in industry in December 1974. They then launched a drive to sum up their past

ten years' experience in learning from Taching and discuss how to continue doing so in the next decade.

Since 1975, guided by the important directive of Chairman Mao on theory and inspired by the spirit of the Second Plenary Session of the Tenth Central Committee of the Chinese Communinst Party and the Fourth National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, the Kailuan workers and staff members have delved into earnest study of the theory of the proletarian dictatorship, criticized the ideology of bourgeois right and kept in mind the great goal of communism. They have done still better in learning from Taching, with production on the rise. By December 23, 1975 the Kailuan coal field had produced 25.2 million tons of ROM coal, fulfilling ahead of schedule the Fourth Five-Year Plan goal of doubling its designed capacity. They are resolved to make bigger strides and win still greater victories in future.

III

New Spirit Pervades Old Collieries

Protracted struggle against class enemies and nature has tempered the Kailuan workers who, armed with Mao Tsetung Thought, have developed a new spirit of daring to fight and being good at it.

They proved their worth when they rose and with bare hands in the face of fierce imperialists and Kuomintang reactionaries, seized arms from the enemy for themselves and joined the national liberation war, in which they made valuable contributions.

After liberation, in pits several hundred metres underground, with high consciousness of class struggle and two-line struggle and always having the country at heart, they grasp revolution more firmly and produce more and better coal. Their merits in socialist construction showed them to be fighters of the same quality on this front.

Since the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the ardour of this revolutionary contingent in socialist construction has surged ever higher, as shown by their daring to take on tough jobs, their solidarity and co-ordination in work and giving fuller play to their traditional style of be-

ing strict and meticulous, so that Kailuan is still more outstanding as a red-banner unit in learning from Taching.

Daring to Take On Tough Jobs

The performance of the Kailuan workers in piercing rock strata up to a thousand metres thick in their quest for coal and maintaining consistent big increases each year would be impossible if not for their daring, comparable to the revolutionary spirit displayed during the period of China's revolutionary wars. Apart from their revolutionary heroism in conquering nature, the Kailuan workers are more importantly aware of two-line struggle, and this has directed their opposition to erroneous trends. "We'll learn from the spirit of 'Iron Man' Wang,"* they say, "to raise still higher the morale of the working class and dare to face challenges in the interest of speeding up coal production."

The Second Mining District of the Tangshan colliery has been outstanding for their revolutionary defiance of the wrong political line and their daring to face the challenge of formidable natural conditions.

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* Wang Chin-hsi, outstanding representative of the heroic workers of the Taching Oilfield, is a glorious figure among the Chinese working class. People called Wang "Iron Man" for his high political consciousness and revolutionary spirit of fearing neither hardship nor death. In Taching's very first days in 1960, Wang Chin-hsi headed the 1205 Drilling Team. In the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution he was elected deputy chairman of the Taching Oilfield Revolutionary Committee. Wang Chin-hsi had contributed greatly to the opening and building up of the Taching Oilfield and to China's petroleum industry as a whole. He was elected a deputy to the Third National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China and a member of the Ninth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. He died of illness in November 1970 at the age of 47.

In June of 1970 the Kailuan Party committee relayed the directive of the Party Central Committee on the unfolding of the campaign to increase production and practise economy. A call went out for Kailuan to learn from Taching and raise its output to double the designed capacity in the Fourth Five-Year Plan period. This stirred the workers and staff of the Second District, who had been mining in a "forbidden zone" since the Cultural Revolution began, and they defied and criticized the notion that "production has already reached a peak and there's no possibility of further exploiting the mines" which was held by a few leading comrades. The mining crew, working with redoubled efforts in the "forbidden zone," forcefully refuted this view with action.

The district Party organization meanwhile initiated activities recalling past suffering and contrasting the bitter past with the happy present. All spoke up in criticism of revisionism, denouncing the crimes of the imperialists and Kuomintang reactionaries in sabotaging the collieries and suppressing and persecuting the workers. Party general branch secretary Wang Li declared: "Chairman Mao has liberated us so that we've left our misery behind and become masters of the mines. In answer to the imperialists' sabotage, and to make up for the time lost due to the interference of the revisionist line, we must work especially hard and get the coal out of this 'forbidden zone' as quickly as possible." He had expressed what was in the hearts of all in the district. Party members and activists stepped forth under the leadership of the Party; mining teams emulated each other. Soon the district's production had entered a new phase.

This "forbidden zone" had been sealed by the imperialists for several decades. It was complicated in geological

structure and there were problems with ground water and gas. It was Wang Li who led a crew called the "explorers" to open it up. Based on the laws governing changes in the natural conditions in the zone, they cleared the haulage and gate road metre by metre. They were nearly swamped at times in the soft floor covered with water seeping from the coal face, but in such places, too, they worked. Inspired by the revolutionary spirit of Taching to tackle the hard jobs, the miners of the district obtained large amounts of coal from this "forbidden zone." On September 4, 1970 they produced 6,036 tons, a record for any one day and double the planned target. They paraded into the colliery's Revolutionary Committee office with a big-character statement of this good news written on a large sheet of red paper. But, much to their astonishment, they were met with remarks from certain leading comrades that they had scored the record only "at the sacrifice of politics," and that "their orientation was wrong."

Wang Li could not repress his anger as he recalled his thirty years in the pit and the bitter trials they had gone through in that "forbidden zone" in the past. He led the workers of his district in a relentless struggle against these fallacies. He stated the case of the workers sharply: "We represent more than 900 workers of the district who have been striving to learn from Taching, trying with proletarian politics in command to mine more coal for the revolution, for speeding socialist construction. Have we, or have we not, done this 'at the sacrifice of politics'? And our orientation. What's wrong with it? Are we, or are we not, going to follow the general line for socialist construction formulated by Chairman Mao? Are we, or are we not, going to carry out the Party Central Committee's

directive on unfolding the movement to increase production and practise economy?"

Their revolutionary action won the admiration and support of the colliery's Party committee, and their example spurred the Tangshan colliery to produce more that month than ever before. They carried on the fight against varying shades of Right-conservative notions, and the district's production increased by a big margin year after year. In the first few years after reviving this once abandoned "forbidden zone," the miners wrested more than 1.7 million tons of coal from it, setting an example for all Kailuan.

Outstanding workers like "Iron Man" Wang have come to the fore in the movement to learn from Taching. One of these is Hou Chan-yu, a crane erector of the electric apparatus team at the Chaokochuang colliery. A miner since 1946, this veteran worker looks upon the "Iron Man" of Taching, Wang Chin-hsi, as his model and learns from him his utter devotion to the cause of revolution and his defiance of hardships. Hou declares: "Learning from Taching and from 'Iron Man' Wang means that we go all out in our work and defy difficulties and hardships as he did." And Hou Chan-yu does just that.

When his team was assigned the task of getting a motor down the pit, which meant passing through three shafts and, as planned, would require three shifts, Hou and his crew did it in one shift, defying fatigue and with well coordinated help from other units.

During the tense time in 1972 when the Chaokochuang colliery was fighting flooding by ground water while at the same time striving for high production, Hou put in 52 workdays in a month, forgetting sometimes even to eat the lunches sent by his family. While on jobs installing electric equipment, his thoughts went often to his class brothers

who were fighting the flood, and during work breaks he would take boiled drinking water down the pit for them. For more than two months he never went home once, though he lived only a few hundred metres away. Urged to rest, he would say: "I'm a Communist Party member and must stick to my post. I'll not leave till the flood is controlled."

Hou acted beyond the call of duty. One instance was when a crew was trying to get a large slime pump down the pit and the cage got stuck in the shaft as soon as the pump was loaded onto it from the crane. There was no time to lose and the crew were worried as they tried to find a way out. Suddenly there was a flash of light as Hou Chan-yu made his way towards the shaft in his safety belt. Young workers tried to stop him, shouting: "Master Hou, you can't go down; it's too dangerous. We're young, let us!"

"I'm a Party member," he said, and insisted that he should go into the danger area first. With that he climbed into the 200-metre deep shaft suspended by his safety belt. Groping his way along the cage way and balancing himself on the two-inch cage-way beam, feeling with a hand or foot places he could not see, he cleared away all obstacles and the pump was lowered into the pit in time.

When Hou's team needed a truck crane and they suggested building one themselves on an old truck, certain people had ridiculed the idea, saying: "Crane erectors may push, pull or carry, but can they make a crane?"

Hou's fiery answer was: "We workers are the makers of history. We must shake off mental fetters like that and get on with the job." The team worked day and night and produced a truck crane using only crude tools. Hou

Chan-yu was most happy to see the crane in operation, though he was noticeably thinner for it.

While working for socialism, Hou is a true Communist at heart and criticizes the ideology of bourgeois right by his words and selfless deeds. He goes down the pit to do extra work after his own shift and in the past five years has piled up an average of 450 workdays a year. He often says: "We don't make revolution for pay. It's not a working-class idea to keep that kind of account. The country and the people need coal — an extra spadeful means that much more contributed to the cause of revolution." His fellow workers like him and call him another dauntless "iron man."

The staunchness of the miners is inseparable from the revolutionary thinking and action of the leading cadres. Since the Cultural Revolution and especially after more study on the theory of the proletarian dictatorship, the leading cadres are able more penetratingly to criticize the ideology of bourgeois right. Main leading cadres at Kailuan began taking turns joining in productive labour down the pit for a third of their time, while the rest of their work time was equally divided between making investigations and in office duty. This "three-thirds" system brings the leading cadres closer to the rank and file and promotes the growth of the coal industry.

The deputy secretary of the Linhsi colliery Party committee and vice-chairman of the colliery Revolutionary Committee, Chang Wen, displayed this quality well in April 1973 when the two loading chutes of an underground coal bunker got clogged due to the coal near the walls being too wet. There would be a total stoppage of coal flow if something wasn't done. Chang Wen rushed to the scene, grabbed a safety belt and put it on, then asked

to be lowered into the pit to clear the chutes. When young workers objected, saying they should go down instead, Chang smiled and replied: "You mean it's only dangerous for me, and not for you?" And with that he descended into the coal bunker, which was seven metres deep and four across, and there with his shovel worked together with the miners for two tense hours, not only clearing the chutes but placing two steel sheets on both sides to prevent a recurrence. The miners said: "We sweat and so do our leaders, our faces are covered with coal dust and so are theirs; when our leaders go up the mountains with us, we dare to overpower tigers."

United in Struggle

With the deepening of the socialist revolution, the workers, technical personnel and cadres are becoming more conscious of class struggle and the struggle between the two lines, so that a brand-new socialist relationship has emerged among production units and individuals. Solidarity in struggle has been attained.

In the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the workers and staff of Kailuan firmly grasped the general direction of the struggle and united in bombarding Liu Shao-chi's revisionist line. Since the founding of the revolutionary committee in 1968 they have implemented the Party's various proletarian policies and united more than 95 per cent of the cadres and rank and file of the collieries, bringing into play positive factors and giving rise to a lively political situation.

The workers at the Machiakou colliery who had split into two factions became comrades-in-arms again through

their common criticism of the revisionist line of Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao. With such unity, the colliery completed the tasks of the Fourth Five-Year Plan in three years and was cited as an outstanding unit in the entire mining region for being the first to reach the target of doubling production over the designed capacity.

An incident at the Luchiato colliery during a windstorm illustrates the noble socialist co-operative spirit of the workers. It was June 1972 when a gale blew down the giant gantry crane straddling the eighty-metre wide slurry pond. The crane, 28 metres high and weighing 214 tons, is indispensable in this colliery, where production processes are highly co-ordinated. The ROM coal goes through the washery, leaving a fine coal residue which flows with slime water into the slurry pond to settle. The coal is then lifted in buckets by this gantry crane for transport out. With the crane down, the coal buckets remained in the pond and the slime water from the washery could not flow, which caused the washery to stop work. Actually, the entire colliery was idled, for the interruption of the water circuit stopped all the hydraulic mining and hoisting.

In this emergency, the Kailuan Party committee called on all collieries to join the battle, and pledges of all-out support came pouring in from them. They determined to produce more to make up for the stoppage at the Luchiato colliery.

At the same time, the Luchiato workers declared: "The wind may blow down our crane, but not the revolutionary spirit of the working class. We won't let the accident lower our production; we'll raise it instead!" Led by the colliery Party committee, the workers fought on three fronts -- emergency repair work on the gantry crane,

dredging the slurry pond and mining at the pits. The secretary and deputy secretary of the Party committee, and the member of its Standing Committee responsible for production went to the three fronts respectively and directly led the battle. The entire colliery turned out as a single fighting force.

Most urgent was the crane repair, and this task was undertaken by the Kailuan Machine Repair and Manufacture Plant which, despite its heavy load of work, sent more than twenty workers and technicians to Luchiato.

The damage to the crane was serious. One leg had snapped, another was warped, and the main girdle, or bridge, was twisted like a rope, while many other parts were out of shape. All this, however, did not stop the men, who were resolved to get the job done in the shortest possible time by relying on collective wisdom and strength in the guiding spirit of self-reliance.

The welding of the girdle could not be done in the welding workshop, due to its size, so the workers decided to weld in the open. The shop director and deputy director were both ill, but they kept at work nonetheless. Especially the former, Old Sun, a Communist Party member who had received treatment in hospital only the day before, felt the responsibility and left his sickbed to attend the shop's mobilization meeting. There he said animatedly: "Our shop already has plenty to do, but repairing this crane means getting the colliery's production going. It affects the entire country's coal production. Can we do it?"

No sooner had Old Sun issued this challenge than there was a loud chorus: "Yes! We pledge to repair the crane at top speed." And in the heat of summer they welded

and riveted in turns, hammering the steel structure back into shape.

With no blueprints to go by in doing this, the workers of the machine shop said: "Chairman Mao teaches us **that the masses are the real heroes.**" They set up a three-in-one team of cadres, workers and technicians to tackle the problem, put their heads together in calling on their own experience, and so restored the parts one by one.

Other workshops of the plant, in the spirit of socialist co-operation, also assigned experienced workers to help, and the teams worked round the clock. To assure quality, they used a streamline method, with the work checked at each stage. The girdle repair, estimated to require at least two months, was done in only seventeen days. Apart from speed, they economized in the use of steel.

It was different at the slurry ponds and in the washery where, even with all the diesel- and electric-powered cranes and also bulldozers at work, the dredging was still too slow to keep up with the slurry, which continued to pour in from the washery. The Party committee then mobilized all available manpower and transport means to join the battle — cadres, workers, housewives, school children and nearby peasants, with shovels, carts, baskets and scrapers which the workers rigged up on the spot. This speeded the dredging, and the work scene at night, with lights reflected on the water, looked more like a busy harbour than a mine.

The workers' enthusiasm and the socialist co-operation of the collieries was infectious. The washery's engineer, Su Yuan, plunged into the struggle and noticed that the daily dredging was just one-tenth what the washery was pouring into the ponds each day. Already three of the four ponds had been filled. What would happen before

the gantry crane resumed work? Could the slurry be strained out before more slime water spilled into the ponds? Engineer Su recalled his failures in experimenting with this in 1956. He knew the cause of his failures too — working on his own. He had failed because he did not co-operate well with the workers and was therefore unable to benefit by their experience. Tempered in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, Su resolved to integrate with the workers and peasants and not to shun responsibility. He confidently placed his idea before the colliery Party committee.

After a discussion that went on late into the night, the colliery Party secretary asked: "You're quite sure the experiment will succeed this time?"

"Quite sure," Su Yuan replied in high spirits. "My failures before have been a very useful lesson to me. Much more important though, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution has taught me the truth that **the masses are the real heroes**. I'm convinced that by learning from the workers' spirit of dedication to the revolution and from their rich experience, we can iron out all problems."

"You're quite right; it is important." The Party secretary grasped Su Yuan's hand encouragingly and said: "Go ahead with your experiment. Be bold, consult the workers when you run into difficulty. The Party committee supports you."

That very evening Su Yuan met with the workers and asked for their suggestions, many of which he incorporated into his plan. This gave him popular as well as technical support. He always showed up where the going was the hardest, lending a hand while watching the situation. He moved into the workshop and lost weight from the strain of the work, but his enthusiasm never waned. Seeing him

soaked to the skin in sweat and his face covered with slurry, the workers urged him to rest. But the engineer only said: "How about you? Have you rested?" And so it was for the seven days and nights that the work went on in the ponds.

The experiment was successful, with two-thirds of the slurry retrieved before it spilled with the slime water into the ponds. The crane repair could go on without the pressure of time.

On the third front — the battle underground to keep production up, the miners worked in unity and the mass movement for higher output surged forward.

In August 1972 a drifting team in the Second Mining District struck sudden changed geological conditions which considerably slowed down their work. The general Party branch of the First District issued a call to all of its miners to help out, and immediately the entire district was astir. The district head proposed that they give their fellows a hand over the hump. "Does it matter if we put in extra work?" he asked.

The miners' answer was a straightforward pledge: "We'll give our sweat and pluck. Let's unite and strive for higher production." And so the First District decided to dispatch the strongest of its three drifting teams to shoulder the job at the most difficult spot in the trouble area. It meant a one-third reduction in the First District's coal-cutting force, and could mean lowering its daily output by several hundred tons. Could anything be done about that? "Yes," the remaining two teams replied. "We guarantee the output of our entire district." This spirit greatly inspired the workers of the Second District, who declared that with such helping hands extended to

them they would go all out to clear away all obstacles to increased production.

"Disregard the division into districts and fulfil our task on time!" was the watchword of the First District workers, and throughout the entire "general offensive" they ignored shifts, division of labour or the working day. Anyone finishing his own job would help wherever he was needed. Day and night these several hundred masters of the mines fought on, helping the Second District solve its problem. Nor did they put the amount of coal they mined into their own account book, but entered it in that of the Second District. This communist style of unity and co-operation won praise throughout the Kailuan coal mines.

Displaying the socialist spirit of broad co-operation, the workers and staff members restored the gantry crane to normal operation in the short space of two and a half months, while the coal output for that year, far from dropping, exceeded the planned figure by 3,000 tons.

Strict and Painstaking Work

The workers and staff members of Kailuan, smashing idealism and metaphysics, have held fast to materialism and dialectics and the scientific attitude of practice first. They dare to fight, dare to take on hard jobs, and are good at these. Since the Cultural Revolution, the Kailuan Party committee has issued the call to all workers and staff at Kailuan to further learn from the Taching workers' spirit as expressed in their "three honests." These are: honest in person, honest in speech and honest in deed. Also their "four stricts": strict in demands in work, strict in organization, strict in attitude and strict in discipline.

They call this their painstaking and exacting style. It means being like the Taching workers, who will start over on a job that does not come up to the high standards set for it. It means being painstaking in study and investigation, grasping the key factor or the principal contradiction in a situation and assiduously grasping the objective laws that govern it. It means opposing careless and slipshod work.

The workers and staff members of the Third Mining District at the Linhsi colliery were exemplary in learning from the Taching spirit of plain living, hard struggle and rigorous demands in work. With this spirit the district had promptly corrected a situation in 1971 which prevented attainment of the year's production target. The workers had severely criticized the district's leaders, attributing the cause of the failure to the wrong directives they thought up in their secluded offices. The leaders accepted the workers' correct criticism, went down to the rank and file and relied on them. They found that the problem lay in poor engineering at the coal face and poor maintenance of electric apparatus. To correct these defects, they strengthened political and ideological work and established an improved system of management where workers at team level were made responsible for political propaganda, production, safety checks, financial accounting and daily life; a workers' management group was to function at each coal face, and a three-in-one team at each mining district.

The workers' participation in management stimulated their socialist enthusiasm, bringing rapid improvement in engineering and maintenance quality, so that the initiative was gained in production. "The question of how to look at quality is a matter of political line," said the workers.

To see how this new system of worker participation in management worked, we may cite the example of a new district deputy director who worked for a day erecting four props at a coal face. The workers' management group, when checking the props, considered some of them not up to standard. So, without any prompting, the leading cadre immediately took down the props and re-set them, this time fulfilling the requirements. Only then did he leave the pit. The next day at the pre-shift meeting he made a self-criticism and at the same time praised the workers' management group for their strictness. The workers were impressed by this leader's exemplary conduct, and a new style arose in the district of a general regard for quality and making its attainment everyone's duty.

This voluntary observance of rules contributed to further improving quality, so that by 1972 cave-in and prop accidents were practically nil at coal faces, while mechanical perfection reached 94 per cent. That year saw large production increases month after month, with quality up and cost of production down.

The Kailuan Party committee considered this Third District at the Linhsi colliery a good example and held a field meeting to popularize its experience. Most of the more than 6,000 mining teams, all coal faces and every district of the collieries adopted measures like those at Linhsi, and a more than 20,000-strong workers' management network was formed at Kailuan. The workers paid attention to political line, work style, production, and to continuously improving management at the collieries. Now, at Kailuan, all sections of the more than 400 kilometres of underground roads are under the charge of definite people; each of

the thousands of machines has a record book and their upkeep is orderly and meticulous.

At one coal face where the wetness of the coal made it cling to the chain-scraper conveyor, damage to the chain was very hard to detect. A breakdown at any one of the more than 560 links in this 200-some metre chain would mean a work stoppage of at least an hour. To prevent this, the workers' management group at that coal face sees that all the links are checked daily. Where there is no room for a man to squeeze in, they examine the links from beneath the chain, wiping each one clean and replacing any weak links on the spot.

Party committees at all levels in Kailuan teach by example, their members taking part regularly in productive labour at the coal face. Close to the workers and to reality, they take great pains in study and investigation, never drawing conclusions without all the facts, whether in analysing class struggle, implementing a policy, or drawing up and fulfilling a production plan. This has become a rule observed voluntarily by all cadres.

They have over-all five- or ten-year plans for each colliery, all arrived at after careful study and research. In formulating Kailuan's plan to produce twice the collieries' designed capacity of coal during the Fourth Five-Year Plan period, six general surveys were made beginning in 1970. The most extensive was of three months' duration and involved 84 survey teams of more than 600 members. They collected first-hand information on political and ideological work, labour force, coal reserves, equipment, progress in renovating the collieries and other main links of production — altogether more than 20,000 items. They then made the plans for each colliery and mining district, deciding details for the transformation of shafts and their

production targets. The Kailuan mines have in recent years achieved large increases in production, at the same time maintaining a balance in mining and drifting. The outputs from development, preparation and extraction have all been kept above the state standards. Safety in production has in the main been achieved. All of this is inseparable from the Party committees' implementing the Party's general line for socialist construction, their careful political and ideological work, and their persistence in a strict and painstaking work style.

IV

The Life of the Coal Miners

After liberation, with the development of the socialist revolution and socialist construction, the Kailuan coal miners' life changed tremendously.

Chairman Mao tells us that while we are increasing production and practising economy, we must at the same time pay attention to the safety, health and necessary welfare facilities of the miners. The Kailuan Party committee shows constant concern for safety in production and the well-being of the masses, and places them high in importance. The mines not only carry out revolution and production vigorously, but are gradually improving the working conditions and welfare facilities. The miners' income, living accommodations, medical care and cultural life are all improving, fully reflecting the superiority of the socialist system.

Improved Working Conditions

Ensuring safety in production is the consistent policy of the Chinese Communist Party and the people's govern-

ment. After the founding of the new China, a series of instructions, policies and rules were formulated for enhancing safety in production and gradually improving and perfecting the rules and regulations governing this.

In September 1951 the Central People's Government issued "Tentative Regulations for Safety in Coal-Mine Production." In 1956 the State Council issued "On Prevention of Silica Dust in Factories and Mines." In 1961 the state issued "Provisional Regulations for Safe Production in Coal Mines." With consistent improvement in working conditions and raising of the mechanization level, in 1972 the Ministry of Fuel and Chemical Industries, acting on Chairman Mao's instruction to carry out the tasks of struggle-criticism-transformation conscientiously and responding to the need of the coal industry to develop, summed up the experience and lessons of the miners and the staff members in the three great revolutionary movements — class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experiment — upon which they revised "Provisional Regulations for Safe Production in Coal Mines." The ministry required all departments concerned to make production safe on the basis of deep proletarian feeling.

In doing this work the Kailuan mines seriously follow the mass line and have set up a series of safety organizations and a mass "safety network," putting into practice the guiding principle of combining specialized work with the mass movement. There are safety-check departments and sections throughout the collieries, in all pits and plants, with leading cadres at different levels responsible, now altogether more than a hundred people. Besides, special groups are charged with the responsibility of improving flood and fire prevention, ventilation, gas detec-

tion, maintenance of roadways and testing for dust. More than 4,000 workers are concerned with safety on the job, 24 hours a day at every roadway and coal face.

Various training classes in technical subjects and in safety are organized among the miners several times each year in order to stimulate the initiative of the masses for safe production and to raise their technical level. There is a "safety day" each week, when the miners sum up their experience in safety work through discussion, and also give comments and suggestions. Every safety organization mobilizes the masses at specified times to make an over-all inspection of the work and calls special meetings to review the situation, sum up experience, search for hidden dangers and further improve this work.

The Party and government at the same time focus great attention on reforming working conditions. They allocate large sums of money and much manpower for improving mining methods, ventilation down the pits and other protection facilities, radically changing the miners' working conditions.

In the wake of liberation, the Kailuan mines began renovating the old ventilation system which hampered fresh-air supply with its small-section roadways, irrational air flow and leakage of air. Eleven new air shafts with 690 fans were installed and the volume of circulating air greatly increased. Now, from a station several hundred metres underground to coal faces kilometres from the pit mouth, there is plenty of fresh air to dissipate harmful gases. The volume of air passing the coal faces has been increased from one cubic metre per minute per miner to at least four cubic metres, while the temperature has been reduced from above 30°C to less than 21°C.

Before liberation there was no water pipeline for dust suppression in the entire field, and dust obscured the coal face, its density per cubic metre of air while developing a coal face reaching 1,000 mg. Many miners became victims of silicosis and in time lost all capacity to work. Such victims were simply thrown out of the mines by the capitalists and could only wander in the streets, to die of their disease aggravated by hunger and cold. After liberation, the Kailuan mines at once carried out comprehensive technical transformation to keep down dust at the coal face. With more than 100,000 metres of water pipe for dust control, Kailuan has now combined wet drilling with water spraying, which safeguards the miners' health and promotes production.

The miners went down the pits of the old Kailuan with no protective clothing or devices. For shoes they bound tin-lined slats of wood to their feet; for clothing they had only rags. After liberation, the collieries provided the miners with ample labour-protection gear. In the first several years after liberation some seventeen labour-protection articles were issued to each miner working underground. These included safety hat, overalls, high rubber boots and miner's lamp. Raincoats were issued to all miners who worked in places where there was water seepage. Various labour safety devices for different jobs number more than 150, all of which are supplied by the state free of charge to the workers. Special carts keep every coal face supplied with drinking water. The miners are happy to work in the new, excellent conditions, with ample fresh air and adequate lighting, conditions which they often contrast with the misery of the past.

A Secure Livelihood

Before liberation, the foreign imperialists and domestic capitalists used every means to fleece the coal miners in order to squeeze maximum profits out of them. A miner's wage for a month would buy only two and a half sacks of flour, sixty kilogrammes. The capitalists and feudal bosses, with their contract labour system in force at the mines at that time further exploited the miners by discounting workdays, imposing fines, withholding wages, demanding "gifts," and so on. In order to live on, the miners had to take other jobs after their shift in the mine, pulling rickshaws or doing other such grilling labour. Still their family could barely survive on bran and wild greens.

In glaring contrast was the luxury and extravagance of the capitalists', managers' and higher staff members' life. In 1939, E.J. Nathan, the general manager and agent of British monopoly capitalism, got a monthly salary of 43,000 yuan (KMT currency), or 2,870 times what a miner got. A miner would have to work 230 years to make what Nathan got in a month.

Since liberation the new Kailuan mining administration has thoroughly changed the wage system so that the miners' income has steadily increased. Their wages now range from 33 to 99 yuan (Renminbi), with 15 to 25 yuan extra a month for work down the pit.

These figures do not give the whole picture, however. China's flourishing domestic market and stable prices of consumer goods and daily necessities, the nominal house rent and free public utilities all boost the actual income of a miner. Especially for underground work, the pay may amount to several times what a miner requires for his own living expenses. Now a miner's home is almost certain

to have a radio and sewing machine, and the family members to have wristwatches and bicycles. Many have savings in the bank.

In the old society, while Kailuan had its grand buildings and villas, the miners for the most part lived miserably, with the fine buildings reserved for high staff members, overseers, feudal bosses and their lackeys. True, a few miners' "dormitories" stood as "window-dressing," but these were not for the mass. Local miners went long distances on foot to their miserable homes and trudged back again the next. Miners from other localities had no choice but to lodge in the capitalists' "boarding houses," squalid quarters for which they paid exorbitant rent and rates. These were shabby, vermin-infested shacks, their walls hoary with frost in winter and overgrown with moss in summer. After the torturing day's work the men could only crowd onto the bare brick platform bed with nothing but their tattered clothes for cover. Some who could not afford even this accommodation slept in old temples or in the open.

After liberation the Party and government allocated large sums with which new, adequate housing was built and which changed the miners' housing situation.

Now the entire Kailuan region has many new workers' villages for miners' families, while "singles" are accommodated in neat, quiet, well-equipped dormitories. Viewing the fields at night, one is impressed with the myriad lights like jewels in a city which is never dark. Who could imagine that the masters of this new city are the selfsame "pit-beggars" who slept in abandoned temples before liberation!

A workers' new terrace housing 267 families flanks the scenic People's Park of Tangshan city. Of these families,

121 had lived in the squalid "boarding houses" of the bosses before liberation. A recent survey revealed that there are over 400 bicycles, 100 sewing machines, 200 radios and 200 wristwatches in the block, and every family has money in the bank. Such is the livelihood of the Kailuan coal miners today.

The change in livelihood of the family of the old miner Chi Teh of the Linhsi colliery is typical. Chi Teh was only ten years old when, before liberation, he and his mother fled the starvation of the countryside and went to the coal fields. The boy scavenged bits of coal from the stone piles at first, joining the ranks of temporary mine workers at twelve. Still he and his mother ate the residue from the bean-oil press and wild vegetation. . . . But just look now! Chi Teh has a family of eight. His wife is a vice-chairman of the neighbourhood committee, his three older children are all working, while the three younger ones are either in middle or primary school. The total monthly income for the family is over 200 yuan, of which 1.20 yuan goes for rent and 120 yuan for food, clothing and miscellaneous expenses, leaving more than eighty yuan each month for household furnishings and such individual items as bicycles and watches. Chi Teh radiates excitement when he contrasts his present, happy life with the old. He always tells how this good life is all due to the revolution led by Chairman Mao and the Communist Party.

Rich Cultural Life

After liberation, the Party and government showed great concern for the cultural life of the workers and staff mem-

bers. In 1950 Tangshan, Chaokochuang, Linhsi, Tangchiachuang and other collieries set up free, spare-time schools for the coal miners, who through the generations could never go to school. To have the chance now to learn to read and write was a great boon.

Wang Yi-hsuan of the Chaokochuang colliery was nearly fifty at the time of liberation. He immediately signed up for the spare-time classes, saying excitedly: "Before liberation no one in my family ever went to school. I'm old now, but I'm still eager to learn to read so as to make a greater contribution to our country's construction." Old Wang studied very hard, using his spare time to practise writing, and after several years this once illiterate old worker reached a junior middle-school academic level.

In the Cultural Revolution, after the working class stepped on to the political arena of the superstructure, the workers' spare-time education further developed. In 1973 the Kailuan Revolutionary Committee set up a special committee to strengthen leadership in education work for workers and staff. Lower levels of leadership at the mines also have such committees, with their leading bodies, to carry out spare-time education, and increasing numbers of teachers and facilities have been provided. In the past few years Kailuan has sent 180 workers to universities for study.

Heeding Chairman Mao's directive: **"Take the road of the Shanghai Machine Tools Plant in training technicians from among the workers,"** Kailuan set up its first workers' college on June 2, 1972. On this exciting day more than a hundred advanced and experienced workers proudly and enthusiastically enrolled. Determined to follow Chairman Mao's revolutionary line in education, they have returned

to the mines after graduation in order to contribute more to socialist revolution and socialist construction.

The cultural life in the coal-mining area is constantly enriched, and the education of the miners' children develops apace. The area now has 7 middle, 1 technical and 24 primary schools, with a total enrolment approaching 50,000.

The broad masses of miners, while striving to acquire technical and scientific knowledge, persistently put the study of the Marxist-Leninist classics and Chairman Mao's works in the first place. This has been so especially since the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. They have criticized the counter-revolutionary revisionist line of Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao, criticized the reactionary doctrines of Confucius and Mencius, and grasped firmly class struggle in the ideological sphere. In the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius, centres for instruction in political theory have been instituted in the mines and factories at different levels. There are theoretical study instruction groups in all mining districts and departments, and coaches for the sections or teams. This forms a theoretical study instruction network at Kailuan with more than 10,000 coaches, further promoting the workers' and staff members' theoretical study and steadily raising their consciousness of class struggle and two-line struggle, their awareness of the need to continue the revolution.

Following Chairman Mao's important instruction on theory, the workers and staff are studying the Marxist theory on the dictatorship of the proletariat, further criticizing revisionism and the ideology of bourgeois right, and continuing socialist revolution in the superstructure.

A lively artistic and cultural life prevails among the miners. Every colliery has its amateur art troupes which

go down to the grassroots and present their own song-and-dance or other programmes. Most of these are short but significant, vivid and varied. They are warmly welcomed by the workers, whose deep love for Chairman Mao, the Communist Party, the socialist new life and the communist style of work they reflect.

Sixteen workers' clubs at Kailuan can accommodate a total audience of 20,000. Here, films, plays, balladry and acrobatic shows are often presented.

Kailuan has forty electric-lighted sports grounds, skating rinks, basketball and volley-ball courts, and swimming pools. There is also a well-equipped indoor stadium seating 3,000.

The collieries hold annual sports meets, competing on more than twenty items. Friendly competitions between collieries, workshops and mining districts are frequently held as well.

Medical and Health Care

Before liberation, the Kailuan miners suffered year in and year out under abysmal working conditions and with insufficient food and clothing. Epidemic, infectious and endemic diseases were rampant; many workers suffered and died of silicosis and bronchial asthma. There were only two hospitals with a total of 300 beds and 216 medical workers in the entire Kailuan field, and these served mainly the imperialist agents and domestic bourgeoisie. It was extremely difficult for a miner to be seen at either of these hospitals, and next to impossible to receive decent, effective treatment.

After liberation, with the concern of the Party and government, Kailuan's medical and health services greatly expanded. Seven large hospitals with more than 2,000 beds and 2,500 medical workers now serve the Kailuan workers and staff. In addition, many doctors and health workers in scores of clinics and health centres at the pit faces, workshops and residential areas serve the workers and their families with timely medical prevention and treatment. There are part-time health workers in the production teams underground, besides doctors from the hospitals making regular, frequent rounds down the pits. Emergencies receive the prompt attention of first-aid teams that rush to the scene with specialists and ambulances.

Seaside rest homes and sanatoriums at Peitaiho Beach and the scenic Touho Reservoir have been established for old or chronically ill mine workers, with many enjoying these facilities for convalescence each year.

Chiao Yin-chun, an old miner at the Tangshan colliery, is one who rests at Kailuan's Peitaiho sanatorium. He tells how before liberation he contracted typhus and went without medical treatment till he was only skin and bone. In 1957 he went to the hospital for an injury he received while working. The situation was completely different. It was a Sunday, when most of the doctors were off duty, but when the accident was reported to them by phone several specialists were at the hospital within half an hour. Leading members of the colliery Party committee also went to the hospital and requested a report on the patient's condition every ten minutes. Chiao Yin-chun had received a bad head injury, with a splintered fracture of his jaw and other facial bones. The doctors treated him with the greatest care, feeding him and assigning special medical workers to look after him. Following up their careful

supportive measures, the Kailuan medical staff studied surgical methods to restore the function of the head organs, sending doctors to Peking for advice on repairing the facial bones. Their successful surgery and painstaking care cured Chiao Yin-chun and restored all functions of his head organs. He had to be helped to walk at first, but within two months he returned to production down the pit.

Now, in the sunny sanatorium, Old Chiao speaks excitedly to his visitors, comparing his experience with hospitals before and after liberation. He says: "It's the Party and Chairman Mao who gave me a second life."

As production increases, Kailuan allocates appropriate funds for building well-equipped and spacious canteens, bathhouses, nurseries and kindergartens. The 33 canteens throughout the mining area provide hot tasty meals any time of the day or night. There are 37 new bathhouses, and sunlight lamps and sulphurated water pools are available for bathing at the collieries.

Happy Old Age

Many old miners who suffered a lot in the old society have retired since liberation. The Kailuan Party committee has taken great pains to create a good environment so that they can enjoy a happy old age.

According to the Labour Insurance Regulations of China the retiring age for mine workers above ground is 60, while those working down the pits may retire at 55. Their pension is fifty to seventy per cent of their original wage, according to the number of years they have worked, and is paid entirely out of government funds, with no deduction

from the miners' payroll. They continue to receive free medical treatment. Most of the retired workers live with their families in the mining area. Some choose to return to their native places. For these, the mines remit their pension each month, while medical expenses are refunded in full.

Every colliery appoints special cadres to be responsible for retired workers' affairs, visit them at festival times and the New Year, and have their health checked regularly.

In 1967 the old miner Kuo Han-ching retired to his home village in Shihpuchi People's Commune in Taming County, Hopei Province, a distance of 700 kilometres from the mines. In April 1972, Kuo took seriously ill and his family wired to the Linhsi Colliery Revolutionary Committee. Immediately, a cadre and a doctor were sent to visit him, the vice-chairman of the Revolutionary Committee, Chang Wen, saying to them before they set out: "We must be entirely responsible for Old Kuo and make all necessary arrangements according to his condition." Arriving at Kuo's home, they found the old man lying in bed. He was moved to tears and grasped the visitors' hands. "I'll never forget the kindness of Chairman Mao," he said.

Kuo's neighbours were moved too and commented: "When Old Kuo retired, the mine authorities sent him home by car, together with his luggage. They send him his pension every month, and now when he's sick the authorities immediately send comrades to see him. All of this is due to the wise leadership of Chairman Mao!"

The Kailuan mines pay special attention to retired bachelors, either arranging for people living nearby to look after them or caring for them at the home for the aged in Tangshan city. Lone old workers are thus not

alone, but can spend a happy old age in cheerful, warm surroundings.

This old folks' home is a fine building in a scenic spot. Flowers and trees beautify the front yard, while the practicalities of a vegetable garden and pigsty occupy the back. The rows of bungalows face south and so get the sun. There is also a recreation area. These "singles" usually had suffered from starvation and poverty in the miserable days before liberation. Some formerly had wives and children, but lost all when the cruel society split the families asunder and they wandered separately or died on some lonely road. All are now shown the concern of the government and live in pleasant surroundings. Moreover, not only the Party and state show concern, they have the respect of the people around. Nearby factories, mines, organizations, schools and army units often invite them to tell about the revolutionary struggles in the Kailuan mines and they recall the hard and bitter past, contrasting it with the good days of the present. The retired workers are always invited to attend Kailuan's trade union congresses.

The concern of the Party and government deepens the devotion of the old miners for the Party, Chairman Mao and the socialist society, and though they are retired, their thoughts are still on the mines. They go on doing their best to contribute yet a little more to socialist construction. Some visit the mines frequently, asking about the situation in production, some have organized themselves voluntarily as advisers in production, while others offer their services to the neighbourhood committees or in the workers' housing area as voluntary committee members or traffic guides. Some coach "*wushu*" exercises in parks or do propaganda work. They pay close attention to the

rearing of the younger generation. When the mines take on new young workers, the veterans go to talk with them and give them class education and instruction in revolutionary tradition. These old retired workers remind the youth to take their responsibility as successors to the revolutionary cause seriously and strive to make greater contributions to the revolution in China and the world.

Afterword

This booklet was at press when a strong earthquake struck the Tangshan-Fengnan area in the early morning of July 28, 1976, affecting to some degree all collieries of the Kailuan Coal Mines.

Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee showed the warmest concern, and the People's Liberation Army units and the people across the country rushed all-out aid. The Kailuan workers themselves lost no time in waging a great and momentous battle against the quake and in carrying out relief work throughout the mining area.

The victories were many. Some ten thousand miners on night shift safely returned to the surface a few hours after the main tremor. Ten days of tenacious round-the-clock fighting resulted in the Machiakou colliery beginning to produce again.

In this serious struggle, a great number of outstanding collectives and persons imbued with the splendid communist thinking stepped forth. They performed seeming miracles, and their countless heroic deeds are on the lips of the people.

The Kailuan miners, led by the Communist Party, holding high the red banner **"In industry, learn from Taching,"** and in the spirit of hard work and self-reliance, are striving to build a new, still more beautiful Kailuan.

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